

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 21 and 22. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing

1. (Currently amended) A modular hearing aid comprising:
 - a base unit adapted to contain any of a microphone, a receiver, a battery, electronics and controls, and wherein the base unit can be replaced after use; and
 - an earmold unit removably attached to the base unit, the earmold unit comprising a compliant material and having a shorter useful life than the useful life of the base unit, the earmold unit further comprising a retention mechanism for connection to the base unit such that the earmold unit can be connected to the base unit or removed from the base unit and replaced after use on a more frequent basis than the replacement of the base unit, the earmold unit adapted to contain both a battery and a hearing aid component non-removably integrated within the earmold unit, the hearing aid component comprising at least one of a receiver and hearing aid electronics.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Previously presented) A modular hearing aid comprising:
 - a base unit adapted to contain any of a microphone, electronics and controls; and
 - an earmold unit removably attached to the base unit, the earmold unit comprising a compliant material, a retention mechanism for connection to the base unit such that the earmold unit can be connected to the base unit or removed from the base unit and replaced after use, and the earmold unit comprising both a battery and a receiver non-removably integrated with the earmold unit.

5. (Previously presented) The modular hearing aid of Claim 4 wherein the earmold unit further comprises a shell non-removably integrated with the earmold unit, the shell housing the battery and the receiver.
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Previously presented) The modular hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the earmold unit forms an earmold tip for attachment to a distal end of the base unit.
9. (Withdrawn) The modular hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the earmold unit forms an earmold sleeve for attachment to at least a portion of the base unit.
10. (Withdrawn) The modular hearing aid of Claim 1 wherein the earmold unit forms an earmold tip and an earmold sleeve for attachment to the base unit.
11. – 20. (Cancelled)
21. (Currently amended) A modular hearing aid comprising:
 - a base unit adapted to contain a microphone and electronics; and
 - an earmold comprising a compliant material, the earmold being non-removably integrated with both a battery and a receiver that are non-removable, the earmold having a flexible, mushroom shaped earmold tip adapted to create a seal with the bony portion of the ear canal, the earmold further comprising a retention mechanism for connection to the base unit such that the earmold can be connected to the base unit or removed from the base unit and replaced after use.

22. (Currently amended) A method for replacing an earmold of a modular hearing aid comprising the steps:

providing a modular hearing aid having a base unit and an earmold comprised of a ~~compliant~~ compliant material and having a shorter useful life than the useful life of the base unit, the earmold adapted to contain both a battery and a receiver non-removably integrated within the earmold;

releasing a securing mechanism between the earmold and the base unit, the securing mechanism capable of being released by a user without the use of a separate tool or instrument;

removing the earmold from the base unit;

discarding the earmold;

placing a second earmold onto the base unit; and

attaching the securing mechanism.

23. – 63. (Cancelled)